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Senate Republicans beginning budget process that focuses on results

LANSING – Michigan will join a handful of other states that have overhauled how they spend taxpayer dollars by prioritizing government programs and services based on the results residents want and need, State Sen. Ron Jelinek, R-Three Oaks, announced today.

Several states, including Washington and South Carolina, have switched successfully to results-based government that focuses on how the state can best spend the money taxpayers send it. State leaders will be seeking to answer four questions during the budget process.

The four questions are:

1. How much revenue will the state have for fiscal year 2006?
2. What results matter most to Michigan's citizens and how does government set priorities to attain those results?
3. What percentage of the budget should be spent to achieve each result?
4. How can government best deliver results?

The first question was answered earlier this month when the Revenue Estimating Conference set the state's revenue at \$39.5 billion.

"This is the amount of money we have to work with," Jelinek said. "Just as any Michigan family must budget within their income, the state will do the same, that's called, 'living within your means.'"

The new budgeting system will benefit state government and Michigan residents by:

- Ensuring state government spends the money it has without raising taxes and fees.
- Framing Michigan's budget around results, not bureaucracies.
- Focusing on how most effectively to spend the \$39.5 billion the state has in revenue. The discussions will focus on what to keep, not what to cut.
- Prioritizing and "buying" government programs and services that produce the results Michigan residents want instead of continuing any and all programs that have always existed whether or not they accomplish what was intended.

To that end, the Senate will be working on results teams that will help craft the 2006 budget under the parameters outlined above. These work groups will be targeting outcomes for the money being spent, instead of focusing on funding the state's bureaucracy.

"I intend to be on one of the result teams and to stand up to status quo spending," Jelinek said. "All spending needs to produce positive results or it is money poorly spent. We should not continue to fund programs just because we always have, they must show good results."